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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0324
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2252
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 000122

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR
GOLDBERGER/SHAMPAINE/BELGRADE; PRM FOR PRM/ANE; NSC FOR
ABRAMS/PASCUAL; TREASURY FOR SZUBIN/LOEFFLER/NUGENT/HIRSON;
BRUSSELS FOR LERNER; PLEASE PASS TO USAID FOR
KUNDER/MCCLOUD/BORODIN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: GAZA: LIMITED DELIVERIES CONTINUE; HUMANITARIAN
PROBLEMS REMAIN; RAFAH CROSSING BREACHED

REF: JERUSALEM 111

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Limited truckloads of aid passed through Kerem Shalom crossing on January 23. The Gaza Power Plant received 200,000 liters of fuel oil on January 23, allowing the Plant to generate electricity until January 26. Despite the resumption of electricity, Gaza hospitals report continuing problems and municipal authorities note water and sanitation concerns due to the problems with pumps. Explosives were used to break open barriers at the Gaza-Egypt border, and thousands of Gazans rushed into Egypt. End summary.

Limited Shipments of Fuel and Food

¶2. (SBU) Director of the Palestinian Petroleum Corporation in Gaza Mujahid Salama told Econoff that 200,000 liters of industrial fuel were received and delivered to the Gaza Power Plant on January 23. Mujahid said that the Israel fuel company Dor had received orders that day from the Israeli Ministry of Defense to limit the industrial fuel transfer to 200,000 liters - enough for the Plant to generate power for 12-24 hours. Salama said that 250 tons of cooking gas were received and delivered on January 23, but that no amounts of diesel or gasoline were received. He added that the 250,000 liters of diesel fuel transferred into Gaza at Nahal Oz on January 22 remains in storage on the Gaza side of the transfer station, as the Petroleum and Gas Station Owners Association in Gaza refused to distribute the shipment because the fuel was for the "exclusive use of UNRWA and PA hospitals - not the Gaza public" (see ref).

¶3. (SBU) Gaza Power Plant Project Manager Rafiq Maliha told Econoff on January 23 that the 200,000 liters of industrial fuel shipped on that day will extend the Plant's output to January 26, as the plant continues to produce 65 MW of electricity. Maliha stressed that the shut-down of the Plant's turbines is very costly and time consuming, as "lots of fuel" and at least eight hours is needed to bring the Plant's power production from "cold zero" to 65 MW.

¶4. (SBU) WFP Deputy Country Director Jacques Higgins told Econoff that six WFP truckloads of aid passed through Kerem Shalom crossing on January 23. He noted that one truckload of WHO aid also passed through on January 23.

Mounting Deficiencies In Health Care Services

15. (SBU) Gaza-based WHO National Health Officer Mahmoud Daher told Econoff on January 23 that Gaza's health care sector has become much less effective in treating Gaza's sick in recent days, as fuel and electricity are running very low.

He noted the continued need for spare parts for health care equipment; shortages of pharmaceutical drugs and disposables; and the general deterioration of infrastructure, such as elevators, heaters, cooling systems, plumbing systems, and doors and windows. Daher noted the Gaza's neonatal care rooms have lost power in recent days, spurring the hospitals to develop contingency plans for newborns to be transported to areas with power inside or outside of Gaza.

16. (SBU) Daher confirmed that electricity flow is back in hospitals. However, he stressed that under conditions of such uncertainty, effective health sector planning and organization has been most difficult.

Municipal Water and Sewage Pumps Down

17. (SBU) Gaza Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) engineer Monther Shoblak told Econoff on January 23 that 15 of Gaza's 35 sewage pumps are not operating due to a lack of fuel (an additional three are not operating due to a lack of parts). Shoblak reported that 73 of Gaza's 138 water pumps are not operating due to a lack of fuel. He noted that roughly 90 percent of all CMWU water and sewage pumps are driven by diesel fuel-powered generators, with the remaining powered by electricity from the Gaza Power Plant and/or the Israel Electricity Company (IEC). Shoblak estimated that, as

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of the afternoon hours of January 23 (local), 30 percent of the Gaza population does not have running water in their homes due to the lack of diesel fuel to power pumps.

18. (SBU) Shoblak said that he was forced to discharge into the sea 45,000 cubic meters of sewage on January 22, as he did not have enough fuel to pump all the sewage to wastewater treatment plants. "I had to choose between sewage floods in downtown Gaza or a sewage discharge into the sea," he concluded. He expected that several more sewage pumps would run out of fuel in the later hours of January 23.

Border Breached At Rafah

19. (SBU) UN and security contacts report that many thousands of Palestinians crossed into Sinai starting early January 23, when militants, with the permission of Hamas border guards, blasted holes in the metal wall and concrete blocks on the Gazan side of the Philadelphi Corridor and then used heavy construction loaders to move debris and allow large-scale foot traffic in and out of the Gaza Strip. Contacts report that there were no effective border controls as of 1500 local, and huge streams of Palestinians from Gaza City and northern Gaza clogged the highway to Rafah, desperate to obtain food and fuel from Egypt before border controls are restored.

WALLES